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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/656,484	09/07/2000	Francine A. Alford	IL-10518	2324

7590 10/12/2005
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EXAMINER

LU, KUEN S

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2167

DATE MAILED: 10/12/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/656,484

Applicant(s)

ALFORD ET AL.

Examiner

Kuen S. Lu

Art Unit

2167

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 01 July 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20, 23 and 24 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20, 23 and 24 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendments

1. The Action is responsive to the Applicant's Amendments, filed on July 1, 2005. It is noted that amendments were made to claims 1-20 and 23-24. Also noted is the cancellation of claims 21-22.
2. As for the Applicant's Remarks on claim rejections, filed on July 1, 2005, has been fully considered by the Examiner, please see discussion in the section ***Response to Arguments***, following the Office Action for non-Final Rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

4. Claims 1-20 and 23-24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over by OraCon (Oracle® Applications, Concepts, Release 11i, May 2000, Oracle Corporation, hereafter "OraCon"), in view of OraEng (Oracle® Engineering User Guide, Release 11i, January 2000, Oracle®, hereafter "OraEng"), OraHR (Using Oracle® US Federal HRMS – The Fundamentals, Release 11i, January 2000, Oracle®, hereafter

"OraHR") and OraPO (Oracle® Purchasing User's Guide, Release 11i, January 2000, Oracle®, hereafter "OraPO").

As per claims 1 and 16, OraCon teaches the following:

"network means for communicating electronically" (See Figs. 1-4 and Pages 12-20 where OraCon's Oracle 11i applications are deployed on network architecture, including WAN and internet); and

"knowledge management means for processing data coupled to said network means, said knowledge management means including central repository database for storing data, said central repository database means located at one of the multiple source locations" (See Figs. 1-4 and Pages 12-20 where OraCon's database applications manages the Enterprise Resource Planning and Customer Relationship Management products and operates centrally managed site or diverse areas wherein databases running on server(s) for storing data in the data repository).

OraCon does not specifically teach "product management means for creating specifications coupled to said network means, said product management means located at one of the multiple source locations".

However, OraPO teaches creating purchase order, release or RFQ by completing specification of all criteria and entering document information for getting the document created (See Pages 6-5 to 6-8).

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant's invention was made to combine the teachings of OraCon and OraPO

because both references are dedicated to ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) where OraCon teaches ERP concepts in general while OraPO specifically teaches one of ERP modules, purchasing, and the combined reference would have enabled users of OraPO to utilize OraCon's internet computing architecture to conduct purchasing activities, including creating document by specifying criteria, by web browsing from any areas to access the centrally managed system.

The combined teaching of OraCon and OraPO references further teaches the following:

"a requisition application means for processing data coupled to said network means located at one of the multiple source locations" (See OraPO: at Page 3-16 where online requisition processing is performed, OraCon: Figs. 1-4 and Pages 12-20 where single and centrally managed site or distributed/replicated data sites are available); and "vendor information that is created in said central repository database means of said knowledge management means" (See OraPO: at Page 1-21 where payables setting up procedures includes step, Step 34, for performing the required operation of defining suppliers).

The combined teaching of OraCon and OraPO references does not specifically teach "a job specification that is created in said product management means".

However, OraHR teaches creating and validating positions with associated position descriptions, such as agency, responsibilities, grades and occupational series at Page 3-2.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant's invention was made to combine the teaching of OraHR with OraCon and OraPO references because all references are product modules of, and dedicated to ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) where OraCon teaches ERP concepts in general while OraPO and OraHR specifically teach purchasing and human resources management, respectively, and the combined teaching of the references would have enabled users of OraHR to utilize OraCon's internet computing architecture to conduct position control activities, including creating and validating positions, by web browsing from any areas to access the centrally managed system.

The combined teaching of the OraCon, OraPO and OraHR references further teaches "a web site coupled to said network means, wherein said job specification and said vendor information are posted on said website" (See OraHRMS: at Page 3-2 where Step 34 performs position creation and validation, OraPO: at Pages 6-5 through 6-8 where OraPO creates purchase order, release or RFQ by completing specification of all criteria and entering document information for getting the document created, and OraCon: at Figs. 1-4 and Pages 12-20 where OraCon's database applications manages the Enterprise Resource Planning and Customer Relationship Management products and operates at centrally managed site or diverse areas wherein databases running on server(s) for storing data in the data repository).

The OraCon, OraPO and OraHR teach ERP in general concepts, purchasing and human resources management, respectively as previously described. The references

do not specifically teach "engineering records that are created in said central repository database means of said knowledge management means".

However, OraEng teaches engineering items, including standard, model, option class, planning items, bills or routings are being transferred or copied at Pages 3-8 and 3-9 which suggests the teaching of engineering records are created in the ERP engineering module and database.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the applicant's invention was made to further combine the teachings of OraEng with OraCon, OraPO and OraHR references because all references are dedicated to planning enterprise resources of an integrated application, and the further combined reference would have enabled ERP as an integrated management tool to manage all inter-related and mutually collaborated enterprise resources as a whole.

As per claims 2 and 17, the combined teaching of the OraCon, OraPO, OraHR and OraEng references further teaches "the procurement system that integrates information from multiple source locations ... wherein said network means is a global network" (See OraCon: at Figs. 1-4 and Pages 12-20 wherein OraCon's Oracle 11i applications are deployed over WAN and internet, and OraPO: at Page xvi where products are managed within and across multiple sites).

As per claim 3, the combined teaching of the OraCon, OraPO, OraHR and OraEng references further teaches "the procurement system that integrates information from

multiple source locations ... wherein said network means is a local network" (See OraCon: Figs. 1-4, Pages 12-20 and 40 wherein OraCon's Oracle 11i applications are deployed over network, WAN and internet, and OraPO: at Page xvi where products are managed within and across multiple sites).

As per claims 4 and 18, OraCon teaches "the procurement system that integrates information from multiple source locations ... wherein said network means comprising a local area network or a token-ring network or an Ethernet network" (See OraCon: at Fig. 1-1 and Pages 1-1 through 1-5 wherein OraCon's Oracle 11i applications are deployed over network, WAN and internet, and OraPO: at Page xvi where products are managed within and across multiple sites in combination suggests a procurement system being deployed on a local area network).

As per claim 5, the combined teaching of the OraCon, OraPO, OraHR and OraEng references further teaches "the procurement system that integrates information from multiple source locations ... wherein knowledge management means includes an engineering records center located at one of the multiple source locations" (See OraCon: at Figs. 1-4, Pages 12-20 and 40, where OraCon's database applications manages the Enterprise Resource Planning and Customer Relationship Management products and operates centrally managed site or diverse areas wherein databases running on servers for storing data in the data repository for ERP applications deploying over network, WAN and internet, and OraPO: at Page xvi where products are managed

within and across multiple sites, and OraEng: at Pages 3-8 and 3-9 where engineering items, including standard, model, option class, planning items, bills or routings are being transferred or copied suggesting the teaching of engineering records are created in the ERP engineering module and database serving as the engineering records center).

As per claim 6, the combined teaching of the OraCon, OraPO, OraHR and OraEng references further teaches "the procurement system that integrates information from multiple source locations ... wherein knowledge management means includes a vendor authorization center located at one of the multiple source locations" (See OraCon: at Figs. 1-4, Pages 12-20, where OraCon's database applications manages the Enterprise Resource Planning and Customer Relationship Management products and operates centrally managed site or diverse areas wherein databases running on servers for storing data in the data repository for ERP applications deploying over network, WAN and internet, and OraPO: at Pages xvi, 1-21 and 2-16 where payables setting up procedures includes step, Step 34, for performing the required operation of defining suppliers and authorization control are managed within and across multiple sites).

As per claim 7, the combined teaching of the OraCon, OraPO, OraHR and OraEng references further teaches "the procurement system that integrates information from multiple source locations ... wherein said requisition application means includes an online requisition system located at one of the multiple source locations" (See OraCon: at Figs. 1-4, Pages 12-20 and 40, where OraCon's database applications manages the

Enterprise Resource Planning and Customer Relationship Management products and operates centrally managed site or diverse areas wherein databases running on servers for storing data in the data repository for ERP applications deploying over network, WAN and internet, and OraPO: at Pages C-53 and C-109 wherein OraPO's purchase order approval workflow teaches online requisition system located at one of the multiple source locations).

As per claim 8, the combined teaching of the OraCon, OraPO, OraHR and OraEng references further teaches "the procurement system that integrates information from multiple source locations ... including a website coupled to said network means and wherein said job specification is posted on said website" (See OraCon: at Figs. 1-4, Pages 12-20 and 40, where OraCon's database applications manages the Enterprise Resource Planning and Customer Relationship Management products and operates centrally managed site or diverse areas wherein databases running on servers for storing data in the data repository for ERP applications deploying over network, WAN and internet, and OraHR: Pages 1-4, 1-5 and 3-2 where web browser employee and their manager have access to personal data and career management functionality, including creating and validating positions with associated position descriptions, such as agency, responsibilities, grades and occupational series).

As per claim 9, the combined teaching of the OraCon, OraPO, OraHR and OraEng references further teaches "system that integrates information from multiple source

locations ... including a website coupled to said network and wherein said vendor information is posted on said web site" (See OraCon: Figs. 1-4, Pages 12-20 and 40, where OraCon's database applications manages the Enterprise Resource Planning and Customer Relationship Management products and operates centrally managed site or diverse areas wherein databases running on servers for storing data in the data repository for ERP applications deploying over network, WAN and internet, and OraPO: at Pages 1-101, xvi, 1-21 and 2-16 where requisition is performed on web and where payables setting up procedures includes step, Step 34, for performing the required operation of defining suppliers and authorization control are managed within and across multiple sites).

As per claims 10 and 19, the combined teaching of the OraCon, OraPO, OraHR and OraEng references further teaches "the procurement system that integrates information from multiple source locations ... including a website coupled to said network and wherein said job specification and said vendor information are posted on said website" (See OraCon: at Figs. 1-4, Pages 12-20 and 40, where OraCon's database applications manages the Enterprise Resource Planning and Customer Relationship Management products and operates centrally managed site or diverse areas wherein databases running on servers for storing data in the data repository for ERP applications deploying over network, WAN and internet, OraHR: Pages 1-4, 1-5 and 3-2 where web browser employee and their manager have access to personal data and career management functionality, including creating and validating positions with associated position

descriptions, such as agency, responsibilities, grades and occupational series, and OraPO: at Pages 1-101, xvi, 1-21 and 2-16 where requisition is performed on web and where payables setting up procedures includes step, Step 34, for performing the required operation of defining suppliers and authorization control are managed within and across multiple sites).

As per claims 11 and 20, the combined teaching of the OraCon, OraPO, OraHR and OraEng references further teaches "the procurement system that integrates information from multiple source locations ... wherein central repository database means includes an application programming interface API which controls access to said engineering records" (See OraCon: at Figs. 1-4, Pages 12-20 and 40, where OraCon's database applications manages the Enterprise Resource Planning and Customer Relationship Management products and operates centrally managed site or diverse areas wherein databases running on servers for storing data in the data repository for ERP applications deploying over network, WAN and internet, furthermore, OraCon's the Application Tier is the application programming interface API which controls access to the Database Tier, the engineering records repository in the Oracle 11i applications, and OraEng: at Pages 3-8 and 3-9 where engineering items, including standard, model, option class, planning items, bills or routings are being transferred or copied which suggests the teaching of engineering records are created in the ERP engineering module and database).

As per claims 12 and 23, the combined teaching of the OraCon, OraPO, OraHR and OraEng references further teaches "the procurement system that integrates information from multiple source locations ... wherein said requisition application means includes online ordering information" (See OraCon: at Figs. 1-4, Pages 12-20 and 40, where OraCon's database applications manages the Enterprise Resource Planning and Customer Relationship Management products and operates centrally managed site or diverse areas wherein databases running on servers for storing data in the data repository for ERP applications deploying over network, WAN and internet and OraPO: at Pages 4-19 to 4-21 online purchasing orders is performed).

As per claim 13, the combined teaching of the OraCon, OraPO, OraHR and OraEng references further teaches "the procurement system that integrates information from multiple source locations ... wherein said central repository database means includes a central repository database management program" (See OraCon: at Figs. 1-4, Pages 12-20 and 40, where OraCon's database applications manages the Enterprise Resource Planning and Customer Relationship Management products and operates centrally managed site or diverse areas wherein databases running on servers for storing data in the data repository for ERP applications deploying over network, WAN and internet).

As per claims 14 and 24, the combined teaching of the OraCon, OraPO, OraHR and OraEng references further teaches "the procurement system that integrates information

from multiple source locations ... wherein said central repository database means includes a central repository database management program that is a collaborative environment software program" (See OraCon: at Figs. 1-4, Pages 12-20 and 40, where OraCon's database applications manages the Enterprise Resource Planning and Customer Relationship Management products and operates centrally managed site or diverse areas wherein databases running on servers for storing data in the data repository for ERP applications deploying over network, WAN and internet, furthermore, OraCon's the Application Tier is the application programming interface API which controls access to the Database Tier, and all software modules for the ERP collaborates with each other in order to maintain data integrity for a financial and accounting system).

As per claim 15, the combined teaching of the OraCon, OraPO, OraHR and OraEng references further teaches "the procurement system that integrates information from multiple source locations ... wherein central repository database management program is Livelink®" (See OraCon: at Figs. 1-4, Pages 12-20 and 40, where OraCon's database applications manages the Enterprise Resource Planning and Customer Relationship Management products and operates centrally managed site or diverse areas wherein databases running on servers for storing data in the data repository for ERP applications deploying over network, WAN and internet, furthermore, OraCon's the Application Tier is the application programming interface API which controls access to the Database Tier provides the equivalent functionality of Livelink®).

Response to Arguments

5. The Applicant's arguments filed on July 1, 2005 have been considered. Concerning the teaching for limitations for claims 1-15, please refer to the Office Action as previously described for respective teaching for each limitation in the claims.

6. The prior art made of record

U. Oracle® Applications, Concepts, Release 11i, May 2000, Oracle Corporation

V. Oracle® US Federal HRMS – The Fundamentals, Release 11i, January 2000, Oracle®


W. Oracle® Engineering User Guide, Release 11i, January 2000, Oracle®

X. Oracle® Purchasing User's Guide, Release 11i, January 2000, Oracle®


Contact information

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kuen S. Lu whose telephone number is (571) 272-4114. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday (8:30 am-5:30 pm). If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John E Breene can be reached on (571) 272-4107. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for Page 13 published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 886-217-9197 (toll-free).

Kuen S. Lu

Patent Examiner

September 29, 2005


Mohammad Ali
Primary Examiner

September 29, 2005